Peace and Stability Education Workshop

By Tammy S. Schultz and M. J. Cross*

The U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) conducted a Peace and Stability Education Workshop 13-15 September 2005 at the Center for Strategic Leadership, Collins Hall, Carlisle Barracks, PA. Educators and key leaders from the military services, the Joint Staff, the United Nations, international and non-government organizations (IO/NGOs), interagency offices, and centers of higher education met to explore possible strategies to improve education for senior leaders engaged in peacekeeping, stability and reconstruction operations (PS&RO).

BACKGROUND

Changing dynamics in PS&RO in locations such as Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, and Iraq, have shifted the conditions in field operations. The changing environment requires educational institutions, both military and civilian, to reevaluate and adjust their curricula and educational programs. These institutions cater to a widely diverse audience with widely diverse objectives. There has been little communication and academic interaction between institutions on what is being taught and how it is being taught. While some variance is necessary due to the wide range of tasks to be accomplished in PS&RO, communication between institutions on course content and best practices can only aid in providing the best educational experience possible for students, many of whom will be immediately engaged in these kinds of operations on graduation. PKSOI sought to identify opportunities for synergy and cooperation in PS&RO education. Three objectives of the workshop were: 1) to capture best practices and identify gaps in the various approaches; 2) to identify the best programs, subject matter experts, and initiatives in the field; and 3) to establish a collaborative relationship among all participants to form the basis for continuing dialogue.

WORKSHOP MECHANICS

The workshop was conducted over the course of three days. The first morning panel presentations outlined the changing environment by reviewing the U.S. Army's study on Irregular Challenges to U.S. interests posed by terrorists, insurgents, and international criminals. The challenges posed by failed or failing states possessing weapons of mass destruction, harboring terrorists or criminal cartels, controlling critical energy resources, or threatening U.S. territory cause significant concern and require new thinking to counter. The Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization provided an organizational overview and discussed their progress in coordinating the U.S. Government's civilian agencies in respect to PS&RO. The Marine Corps University presented how that service studies PS&RO at operational and strategic levels. The National Defense University then gave an overview of their curricula and provided an update on their recent Interagency Education

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Conference co-hosted with the Army War College in August 2005. The Fund for Peace provided the final briefing on their proposal for a Conflict Assessment System Tool (CAST), a methodology to diagnose the symptoms or indicators of state pathology.

Following these briefings participants were organized into working groups to discuss the integration of PS&RO into the curriculum, the preparation and development of educators/instructors, best teaching practices, gaps, and offered solutions to better use scarce resources. Working groups then briefed their proposed solutions to the entire group, which provided feedback on those recommendations.

FINDINGS

The six working groups had different approaches to the problems, but some common threads emerged. As a way forward on the Peace and Stability Operations Workshop's proposals to improve PS&RO education, PKSOI has identified: 1) a process to continue momentum; 2) potential leads and supporting agencies with which PKSOI is currently working; and 3) a way to drive the agenda for next year's workshop. As the below proposals highlight, PKSOI recommends establishing communities of practice (COP) based on the PS&RO education issue areas identified: sharing and development of educational resources; multi-organizational curriculum development; and, educator development. The first COP,

MG Huntoon, Commandant of the U.S. Army War College, thanks the Honorable Francis J. Harvey, Secretary of the Army, following the Secretary's remarks at the Education Workshop dinner.

"Sharing and Development of Educational Resources," to be facilitated through a web hub, is a clearly identified gap that several actors, in conjunction with PKSOI, have offered to help fill (see below). PKSOI is still working with a small group of organizations to determine if the remaining two COPs should be established as separate COP, or integrated into similar, already existing groups. A small number of the potential lead organizations will meet in December 2005 to demonstrate the web hub, and make a determination regarding the second and third COP. Each COP is outlined below with PKSOI's recommended major task prioritization for each.

COP 1 – SHARING AND DEVELOPMENT OF PS&RO EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

1. Workshop participants identified a need to establish a COP which would operate through a web portal to access information and allow greater dissemination of best practices in PS&RO. PKSOI is meeting with OASD/Networks and Information Integration, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), and the National Defense University (NDU/ITA) to move forward with a web hub to connect the expanding universe of PS&RO players and institutions, in near real time, to share:

- Lessons learned
- Critical field data compiled by IOs, NGOs, and government agencies
- Background information
- Mission objectives
- Security briefings and updates
- Innovations in practice

- Training resources
- Joint planning mechanisms

COP 2 – MULTI-ORGANIZATIONAL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

1. Establish an Interagency PS&RO Education COP comprised of actors from all services, JFCOM, the interagency, and nongovernmental and international organizations who can accomplish the following tasks:

- Members of the COP should identify which parts of their institution's PS&RO curriculum could provide building blocks that other programs may use to start or improve their own PS&RO programs. Identify the key topical areas that should be addressed in a baseline PS&RO curriculum.

- Clarify the definition of PS&RO.[1]

- Develop PS&RO terminology within the interagency, and develop a cross-agency baseline of PS&RO educational objectives. The Council may also decide to develop a PS&RO interagency version of the U.S. Army War College's Key Strategic Issues List (KSIL).

- Promote the establishment of PS&RO education in the interagency for civilians, such as at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) at the State Department, and attempt to increase other agency participation in DoD schools until a Professional Interagency Education system is established. Increase DoD participation in other agency schools (such as FSI).

- Explore the possibility of developing exchanges or involving members from other agencies/services in simulations.

- Address continuing education, a part of which is ensuring that those about to be deployed into the field have opportunities for refresher courses.

- Collaborate on resources identifying and describing NGOs involved in PS&RO – their contact details, mission statement, operations involved in, donor base, etc. Create civilian adult education school models (such as Harvard's Business School Model) for learning before/during/after cases.

- Expand and improve cultural awareness courses, to include social norms and political culture (how power is organized, shared, and used).

- Develop mechanisms to track educational impact in the field (is the education helping; what it lacks; etc.), to ensure quality of content, and to provide a formal feedback loop to determine effectiveness.

2. PKSOI and USIP are exploring incorporating these efforts with those of the existing Military Education Coordination Council (MECC).

COP 3 – EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT

1. Identify best practices for educators to use in the classroom. In order to facilitate the preparation of educators, this COP should perform the following tasks:

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[1] A note on definitions: Using the Joint Operating Concept for Stability Operations as a starting point, PKSOI defines "stability and reconstruction operations" as multiagency operations that can occur before, during, or after a conflict. S&RO involve all instruments of national and multinational action, including the international humanitarian and reconstruction community to support major conventional combat operations if necessary; establish security; facilitate reconciliation among local or regional adversaries; establish the political, social, and economic architecture; and facilitate the transition to legitimate local governance. Stability operations establish a safe and secure environment; provide essential social services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction and humanitarian relief in order to facilitate the transition to legitimate, local civil governance. The objective is clearly to establish governance that enables a country or regime to provide for its own security, rule of law, social services, and economic activity and eliminate as many of the root causes of the crisis as feasible to reduce the likelihood of the reemergence of another crisis.

- Hold an annual PS&RO Educators Conference. Unlike the PKSOI education workshop, this conference would allow teachers to come and present papers on the topic of pedagogy for PS&RO operations. George Mason University's Peace Operations Policy Program suggested that they may be interested in being the lead for an educator's conference.

- Develop an educator development course, including a portable "teach-the-teacher" program (web-based).

- Develop educational tools, such as assessments of how student experiences fit the existing theoretical frameworks, in order to enable the faculty to leverage recent student field experiences.

- Promote Interagency exchanges of educators.

2. PKSOI and NDU will explore incorporation of these tasks into existing communities of practice to avoid duplication of effort.

PKSOI ACADEMIC CONSORTIUM

PKSOI seeks research papers and case studies in order to improve the international community's effectiveness in PS&RO education. PKSOI will encourage the publication and distribution of such articles.

CONCLUSION

The participants agreed that there is a need for a coordinating/lead agent for PS&RO education. No single agency has the resources to coordinate all facets of PS&RO education; however, PKSOI is committed to coordination with willing organizations to articulate a way ahead. Agencies will be solicited to identify resources and expertise to develop a work plan which will achieve the communities of practice goals. PKSOI will facilitate a proactive process to achieve success in the development of doctrine and educational tenants for peace, stability, and reconstruction operations.

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This and other PKSOI publications can be found on the USAWC/Center for Strategic Leadership site at http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usacsl/IPapers.asp.

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